



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster statement on
USED review of the state's highly qualified teacher plan**

MADISON—A news release issued yesterday by the U.S. Department of Education (USED) criticized our state's plan for the less than 1 percent of our teachers who did not meet the highly qualified teacher requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act.

"The USED has approved 99.5 percent of all Wisconsin teachers as highly qualified in core academic areas under the guidelines of federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Our state is a national leader and has come closest of all states in the nation to reaching 100 percent compliance. The recent USED news release regarding Wisconsin's plan to reach 100 percent compliance does not affect our approved definition of highly qualified teachers and is no reflection on the 99.5 percent of Wisconsin teachers who are already highly qualified.

"Wisconsin, like all states, was required to submit a plan to the USED on how we would ensure that less than 1 percent of the more than 52,000 teachers would meet the federal highly qualified teacher standards in the 2006-07 school year. This plan was reviewed by USED peer reviewers and because this was a paper review process, the USED is asking for additional details and clarification of our plan. The Department of Public Instruction will provide the requested additional details and is confident that the plan will be approved.

"Our state has made progress toward 100 percent highly qualified teachers in each year since NCLB became law. Moreover, Wisconsin always has been proud of the qualifications of our educators: a result of historically rigorous teacher licensing rules, the adherence to those rules by school districts, the excellent teacher preparation programs offered by our institutions of higher education, as well as the implementation of the Quality Educator Initiative (PI 34). We submitted in our plan to USED that we are providing grant programs for new teacher mentors and professional development of teachers in high needs schools which will contribute to our efforts toward 100 percent highly qualified teachers."

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